

Shabbat Chol HaMo'ed Sukkot 5783

A Little Haiku on a Busy Shabbat

Rabbi Betsy Forester

*Hold onto your hats;
This d'var Torah will be short.
First, Shabbat shalom.*

Harvest moon, rain, cold:
Celebrating earth's bounty
And togetherness.

Covenantal joy
Vulnerability and
Radical welcome;

Divine Provenance
One People among many:
Sukkot's different themes.

It's all about schach,
Stars twinkling above, being
In the elements.

Farming and Torah
Stories blending, life
And lore forming festivals

Today, for basking,
Sitting in communal joy,
This tiny People.

Four books of Torah
Mention Sukkot differently,
Overlapping themes.

Exodus, today,
From the first scroll, features
Rupture and repair.

Moshe reaches out
To his far-off, angry God.
Saying: "Show up here."

And God says "okay,"
Sort of. "You can see my back."
Take what you can get.

In crises of faith
Asking feels impossible.
We get lost in fear–

Or ask for too much,
Like the nation down below,
Feeling abandoned.

They worshiped a calf,
Molten gold brought from Egypt.
That's where their fear went.

Freedom and fear
Often chase each other's tails.
We mismanage them.

But sometimes we don't.
Instead we build, together,
From our hopes and dreams.

How do we build from
The point of freedom within
So we can share it?

Start by sitting down.
Go out, sit in a sukkah
Feel how we are blessed

Feel how we are small
How we need one another
How love finds its way.

Listen for a voice,
Not in wind, earthquake, or fire,
But stirring in you.

Trust the urge to love.
Trust the feeling: you are seen.
Build a hope and make it real.

Look up at the stars.
Feel the beauty and blessing
That you are alive.

That's Sukkot, my friends:
A time to germinate,
In soil and in soul

Hope, faith, and resolve;
To see and love Creation
With care and purpose.

*If you didn't guess,
This was a bunch of Haiku
I hope you liked it.*